

Bill was a fun-loving guy, who was frequently the life of the party. Bill's positive and playful outlook on life touched the lives of so many. I am saddened by the loss of such a valuable member of the community and extend my heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.

CONGRATULATING MS. ANN DUNNING FOR 50 YEARS OF OPHTHALMOLOGIC DIAGNOSTIC SERVICE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the distinguished career of my constituent, Ms. Ann Dunning, who has served the Town of Vienna, Virginia for 50 years.

For her decades of comforting and welcoming patients at Mitchell Eye Institute, a local ophthalmologist's office, Ms. Dunning received the inaugural Town of Vienna Outstanding Service Award from Mayor Linda Colbert in a ceremony on Monday, September 26, in a celebration that included generations of her patients.

This honor was initiated by the Mayor and the Town Business Liaison Committee to recognize the individuals in local businesses who have gone above and beyond to better their community. Ms. Dunning's dedication for five decades has earned her the respect, admiration, and trust of her patients and colleagues.

Dr. John Mitchell, the lead ophthalmologist who nominated Ms. Dunning for this award, noted that she has made her patients "feel secure with a continuity of care she has provided them throughout the years." It is no surprise that patients regularly request appointments on days when Ms. Dunning will be working.

Ann Dunning's lifelong dedication to her patients is not only the mark of a passionate individual, but of a community member who recognizes the profound impact we can have on one another in everyday interactions. In her capacity as a medical practitioner, she could have easily adopted a routine that did not account for the feelings of those seeking care.

Instead, Ms. Dunning puts people first. It is exactly this care and kindness that has made her an iconic fixture in the community. I hope that her lessons of gentleness and service will inspire further generations to find ways to make others feel welcome, wherever they may be.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ann Dunning for her 50 years providing ophthalmologic diagnostic service to the Town of Vienna. From her measured demeanor and kind words to her boundless perseverance and dedication to service, Ms. Dunning has illuminated herself as an example to all of us of the comfort we can provide by the smallest actions. I am proud to represent such an upstanding and compassionate citizen in Congress, and I wish her the best in all her future endeavors.

BRAD KARBOWSKY: THE UNION LIFE

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of my union brother Brad Karbowsky. Brad is a longtime labor leader, who got his start installing fire protection systems as a member of UA Local 669.

In his career that's spanned nearly three decades, he oversaw apprenticeship programs to train the next generation of workers. He secured pension and health care funds, and established worker protection initiatives to stand up for those being treated unfairly. This is critical work that upholds a core belief of the American Dream: that if you work hard and play by the rules, you should earn a living for you and your family and retire with dignity.

So today, I want to honor Brad's work and wish him the best in retirement. He's earned it.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RARE DISEASE ADVANCEMENT, RESEARCH, AND EDUCATION (RARE) ACT

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2022

Mr. CARSON. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to reintroduce the Rare Disease Advancement, Research, and Education (RARE) Act. This important legislation will address many of the issues facing rare disease patients and families. This legislation will make a meaningful difference in the lives of those struggling with rare diseases by using increased research to help provide more accurate diagnoses and increased treatment options.

During my service in Congress, I have been honored to represent and meet with many brave Hoosier families that are struggling with rare diseases. I have been moved by their courage. Their strength in midst of trying conditions is not only inspiring, but also instructive. They have educated me and my colleagues about the necessity of increased research and rare disease surveillance in order to provide more treatment options and better diagnoses.

Nearly one in ten Americans live with one or more of the roughly 7,000 known rare diseases. These largely inherited diseases—defined as affecting 200,000 or fewer people—often lack substantive research investments and treatment options. In particular, African-Americans are especially vulnerable to certain rare diseases, including Sickle cell disease and beta-thalassemia. Specifically, the blood disorder Sickle cell disease affects 73 out of every 1,000 African American babies versus only three out of every 1,000 Caucasian babies.

While rare diseases cross the medical spectrum, individuals with rare diseases face some

common challenges. Largely due to their limited patient population size, these individuals may have difficulty obtaining an accurate diagnosis, finding physicians or treatment centers with expertise in their disease, and ultimately finding appropriate treatment options and cures. Frighteningly, roughly 90 percent of rare diseases still lack a treatment approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). While over 450 drugs have been approved for the treatment of rare diseases, millions of Americans who are suffering from a rare disease have no approved treatment options.

Past Congressional action has helped support research at NIH and CDC, supported in part by the bipartisan appropriations letter I lead each year—signed by over 220 House members—in support of increased NIH funding. However, much more work needs to be done to help these agencies improve rare disease awareness, education, research, surveillance, diagnosis, and treatment. This is why the RARE Act is so important. It will expand the ability of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) to study rare diseases by improving treatment, research, and diagnostics of rare diseases through new and existing programs. I am proud to introduce the RARE Act to help address the many unique challenges facing the rare disease patient community.

The RARE Act would provide an important step forward by addressing some of the common challenges faced by rare disease patients and improving rare disease treatment, research, and diagnostics. The RARE Act would expand an existing and successful program at NIH: the Rare Diseases Clinical Research Network (RDCRN). The RDCRN's 21 research "centers of excellence" support the research and clinical trials of over 190 rare diseases and increase the availability of rare disease information to doctors and patients.

The RARE Act would also fill critical gaps in our healthcare system by improving coordination, surveillance, and awareness of rare diseases. For example, the RARE Act would require the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to create a National Rare Disease or Condition Surveillance System. This formalized infrastructure would track rare disease data and help researchers to understand commonalities between diseases and possible treatments, ultimately helping patients like Derrian to find better treatments. The RARE Act would also require the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to expand and intensify its work to ensure that health professionals are aware of rare disease diagnoses and treatments, leading to fewer misdiagnoses like Jocelyn experienced. The RARE Act would also mandate an updated report on rare disease efforts from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to ensure that Congress has the best tools possible to address these issues.

Madam Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this bill to help combat rare diseases. I urge the House to support this bill.